

Dear Members of the American Adoption Community:

On November 3, 2009, Ukraine's central adoption authority, the State Department for Adoption and Protection of the Rights of the Child (SDAPRC) informed the U.S. Embassy in Kyiv that it was suspending the issuances of referrals for both Ukrainian and foreign adoptive parents to visit Ukrainian orphanages due to the increased incidence of H1N1 in Ukraine. According to this notice, no prospective adoptive parents (either Ukrainian or from other countries) will be allowed to visit orphanages to meet their prospective adoptive children beginning November 3, 2009, until the measures taken by the Ukrainian Government are lifted. These measures include a cancellation of large public gatherings and suspension of school and university classes, but do not include travel restrictions. The SDAPRC will keep all pre-scheduled appointments and the adoptive families will still be able to choose children from the database, but these families will not be able to visit children and start the adoption process in the regions. Alternatively, foreign families may cancel their appointments at SDAPRC (they do not need to do anything special to cancel these appointments) and their appointments will be re-scheduled as soon as the Ukrainian government's temporary measures are ended.

As of the posting of this notice, it is unclear how long this suspension will remain in effect, but according to the SDAPRC it may last from three to six weeks, unless the Ukrainian government decides to end the H1N1 measures sooner.

According to the SDAPRC, several foreign families with the referrals issued on November 2, 2009, were already denied access to the orphanages.

The SDAPRC was required to enact this suspension in accordance with the Decree Number 3813 issued by the Ukrainian Minister for Family, Youth and Sports Yuriy Pavlenko, dated October 30, 2009. This decree was issued based on the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Number 1152, dated October 30, 2009.

We will continue to monitor the situation and will post updates as they become available